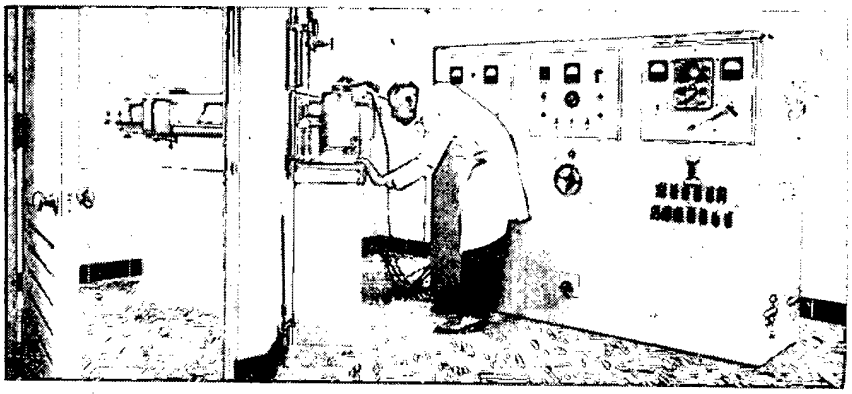
Taking the Tin Out of Tin Cans

◆ TAKING THE TIN out of America's 36.5 billion cans was the subject of some serious talk at the opening of American Can Company's new research and development center in Barrington, Ill. Canco president William G. Stolk predicted a high percentage of tinless cans within 10 years. Elimination of tin was named No. 1 long-range research project of the can company.

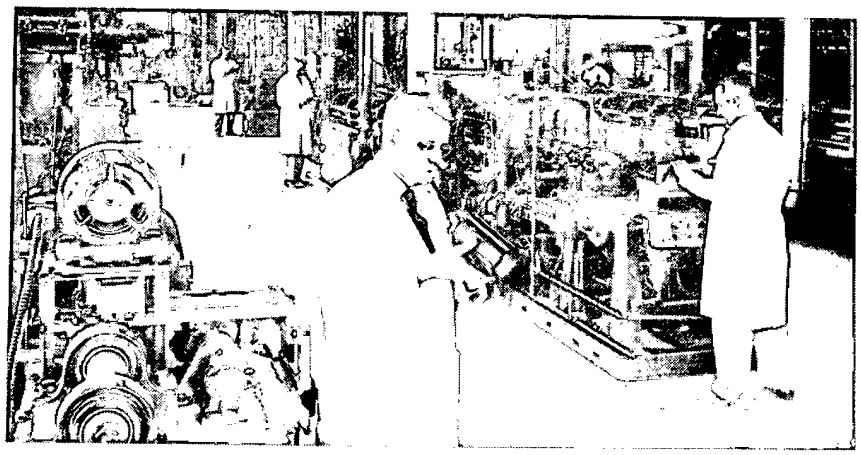
Research on chemically treated but tinless steels is already well underway at the new center and the company is working on soldering methods that would permit use of these steels in high speed manufacture. Rapid welding techniques and organic cements are also under development for seam closure.

Availability and cost make steel a strong bidder for use in future containers but aluminum alloys, aluminum coated steels, zinc, nickel and even titanium are also being considered. Conventional aluminum-clad steel as well as electroplated and vapor deposited stock are being used experimentally.

Solid tinplate bookings indicate the switch to other materials is not an immediate steel mill worry but a brochure on the new laboratory offered this thought: Yesterday's beer can required 3 lb of tin per 1000 cans. Today it's ½ lb for the same quantity using 6.4 billion cases.



RAPID ANALYSIS of metals and checking metal traces in food are jobs of this emission spectroscope at American Can Co.'s new research center.



CAN-MAKING line at Barrington, Ill., research center simulates production conditions, permits testing of experimental cans by American Can Co.